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U lei longspah—the god of wealth. This god is propitiated with a view to obtaining increased prosperity.

U Ryngkew, or *u Basa shnong*, is the tutelary deity of the village. This godling is propitiated by sacrifices whenever they are thought to be necessary.

U Phan u kyrpad is a similar godling to the above.

Then follows a list of minor deities, or, rather, evil spirits, e.g. *Ka Rih*, the malarial fever devil; *ka Khlam*, the demon of cholera; *ka Duba*, the fever devil which is said to haunt the neighbourhood of Theriaghat.

Bivar says "the Khasi religion may be thus briefly defined as forms used to cure diseases and to avert misfortunes, by ascertaining the name of the demon, as the author of the evil, and the kind of sacrifice necessary to appease it." We may accept this description as substantially correct. In the Jaintia Hills, there is a peculiar superstition regarding a she devil, called "*ka Taroh*," which is supposed to cause delirium in cases of fever. When such cases occur, it is believed that "*ka Taroh*" has caused them, and inquiries are made by means of breaking eggs to find out in whose person the demon has obtained a lodgment; or sometimes the sick person is asked to reveal this. When in either of these ways the name of the person possessed by "*ka Taroh*" is known, the sick person is taken to the house of the possessed, and ashes and bits of broken pots are cast into the enclosure, after which, if the sick person recovers, the party indicated is denounced as possessed by the demon; but if the patient dies, it is concluded that the person possessed has not been properly ascertained. If people are satisfied that some one is really possessed, they denounce the person, who is then out-casted. The only way for him to regain his position is to exorcise the demon by divesting himself of all his property. He pulls down his house, burns the materials, his clothes, and all his other worldly goods. Lands, flocks, and herds are sold, the money realised by the sale being thrown away. No one dares touch this money, for fear he should become possessed by *ka Taroh*. It will be observed that, as in the case of the *thlen*, the demon is believed to follow the property.

Mr. Jenkins, in his interesting little work on "Life and

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753 Mr. Jenkins, in his interesting little work on "Life and
776 Work in Khasia," gives a slightly different account of the
826 superstition, in that he states that it is the sick person who
164 is possessed by *ka Taroh*. The above belief is perhaps a
177 Synteng development of the Khasi *thlen* superstition. In the Jaintia Hills "the small-pox" is believed to be a goddess, and is reverenced accordingly. Syntengs regard it as an honour to have had small-pox, calling the marks left by the disease the "kiss of the goddess"; the more violent the attack and the deeper the marks, the more highly honoured is the person affected. Mr. Jenkins says, "When the goddess has entered a house, and smitten any person or persons with this disease, a trough of clean water is placed outside the door, in order that every one before entering may wash their feet therein, the house being considered sacred." Mr. Rita mentions cases of women washing their hair in water used by a small-pox patient, in order that they may contract the disease, and women have been known actually to bring their little children into the house of a small-pox patient, in order that they may become infected and thus receive the kiss of the goddess. It is possible that the Syntengs, who were for some time under Hindu influences, may in their ignorance have adopted this degraded form of worship of the Hindu goddess, "Sitala Devi," who is adored as a divine mother under different names by Hindus all over India: cf., her name *mari-amman*, or mother of death, in the South of India, and the name Āi, mother, of the Assamese.

In the Khasi Hills the god of small-pox is known under the name of *u Siem ñiang thyllieu*. He is not, however, appeased in any way, the people calling on two other spirits, *Thynrei* and *Sapa*, to whom a fowl or a goat is offered.

776 This section cannot be closed without some reference to the
773 household gods of the Syntengs. The legend is that in ancient times there came a woman "from the end of heaven to the borders of the country of *u Truh*" (the country of the plains people at a distance from the foot of the Khasi and Jaintia Hills). The name of the woman was Ka Taben, and she was accompanied by her children. She offered herself to *u Dkhar*, the plains man, as a household goddess, but he rejected her. She then went to the Khasis, who were ploughing their fields,

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823 Apparently no special puja is performed to U Kyllang (the
776 Kyllang Rock) nowadays.

782 The picturesque hill of Symper, which rises abruptly from the plain in the Siemship of Maharam, is visible for many miles. It is in shape not unlike the Kyllang. Symper is said to be the abode of a god called "U Symper." There is a folk-tale
[773] that Kyllang and Symper fought a great battle, and that the numerous holes in the rocks at the base of the Symper hill are evidences of their strife. At the base of Symper there is a great cave, where many cattle find shelter in rainy weather. The people of Mawsynram propitiate the god of Symper in cases of sickness by sacrificing a he-goat or a bull. Symper, like *U'lei Shillong*, is one of the minor deities of the Khasis.

Close to Shangpung, in the Jaintia Hills, there is a small hill called "*u lúm ŋyddieng blai lyngdoh*," where sacrifices are offered on an altar at seed time and when the corn comes into ear. This altar used to be overshadowed by a large oak tree. The tree is now dead.

823 The Wars of Nongjri worship "*u'lei lyngdoh*," the tutelary
776 deity of the village, under the spreading roots of a large rubber tree which gives its name to this village Nongjri. This village worship is performed by a village priest (*lyngdoh*) at stated intervals, or whenever it is considered necessary. There are numerous other instances of hills and rivers being regarded as the abode of godlings, but those quoted above are sufficient for purposes of illustration.

RELIGIOUS RITES AND SACRIFICES, DIVINATION.

776 The Khasis, as has been explained already, worship numerous
782 gods and goddesses. These gods and goddesses are supposed to
753 exercise good or evil influence over human beings according
787 to whether they are propitiated with sacrifices or not. They are even supposed to possess the power of life and death, over men and women, subject to the control of *u Blei Nongtháw*, God the Creator. Thus illness, for example, is thought to be caused by one or more of the spirits on account of some act or omission, and health can only be

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restored by the due propitiation of the offended spirits. In order to ascertain which is the offended spirit, a system of divination by means of cowries, breaking eggs, or examining the entrails of animals and birds, was instituted. The Khasi method of obtaining auguries by examining the viscera of animals and birds may be compared with that of the Roman *haruspex*. Some description of these modes of divination has been given at the end of this chapter. The Khasi religion has been described by Bivar as "demon worship, or a jumble of enchantments muttered by priests who are sorcerers." But even a religion which is thus unflatteringly described is based on the cardinal doctrines of sin and sacrifice for sin. Tradition amongst the Khasis states that in the beginning (*mynnyngkong ka sngi*) there was no sin, heaven and earth were near each other, and man had direct intercourse with God. How man fell into sin is not stated, but it is certain that he did fall. Experts at "egg healing" never forget to repeat the formula "*nga briéw nga la pop*" (I man have sinned). The cock then appears as a mediator between God and man. The cock is styled "*u khún ka blei uba kit ryndang ba shah ryndang na ka bynta jong nga u briéw*," i.e. the son of god who lays down his neck (life) for me man. The use of the feminine *ka blei* is no doubt due to matriarchal influences. There is another prayer in which the Khasis say, "*ap jutang me u blei ieng rangbah me u briéw*" (oh god do not forget the covenant, arise oh man). The idea is that man has fallen into sins of omission and commission (*ka pop, ka lait ka let*) but that God is nevertheless expected to spare him, and to accept a substitute for him according to the covenant (*jutang*). By this covenant God is supposed to have accepted in exchange the cock as a substitute for man. How the cock came to occupy such an important position, tradition is vague and self-conflicting. The fact remains that the covenant of the cock is the foundation of the Khasi religion. It is of interest to mention that amongst the Ahoms the tradition is that Khunlung and Khunlái brought down from heaven the *kái-chán-mung*,* or pair of heavenly fowls, and that to this day the sacrifice of the

* In Ahom *kái* = fowl, *chán* = beautiful, *mung* = country. Therefore *Kái-chán-mung* = fowl of a beautiful country (heaven).

789 strictest sense of the word. It is rather an
754 instinctive activity, which is influenced by superstition to which they have succumbed. In their opinion all misfortune and bad luck are caused by evil spirits. The chief purpose of
[782] their sacrifices is to propitiate them (khein ban khai). But they well know that it is possible to cause others harm with the help of the ksuid. Their magic consists of this and in warding off harm. The magic is not accomplished by special magicians who make a profession of it; but whoever believes he is able to harm others with the help of the devil tries it. In the same way, those who have to ward off harm of any kind hope to be able to accomplish this with the help of the devil.

● 753 If anyone has a throat ailment, whether it
755 is a tumor or only hoarseness, they believe that
776 it occurs through the influence of the devil u lasamdoh. Therefore a rooster or a pig is sacrificed in the courtyard of the person concerned. The blood of the sacrificed animal is given to the sick person to drink so that he may recover.

They do similar things when a person has a toothache or is sick with some kind of mouth ailment. This sickness is ascribed to the devil u jingbih.

753 If a child is born blind they believe that
776 adultery on the part of the father is the cause. This adultery is punished in the child by the devil u kyrdep.

The demoness ka byrdaw causes attacks of cramps, and convulsive cramps are the work of the feared demoness ka shwar.

Existent ailments are made definitely worse by the devil u thyrnrei.

Whoever goes into the forest and hears the call: kâw-hoit, kâw-hoit, should hurry away because the devil u 'suid-lynjang lives there and

77b [753] is calling. He is, however, lame; but whoever answers the call or screams is lost, since he will be seized by the 'suid tynjang and tickled to death.

[763] If one wishes to protect oneself from a violent death, one must propitiate the demoness ka tyrut by sacrifice, because she is the original cause of this method of dying. The Khasi have a great respect for violent death as it increases the difficulties of the prescribed ceremonies of burial, even making them impossible, which would in turn deny the spirit of the departed one peace in eternity.

[775] They also live in fear of the devil u 'suid-lam-iap (the messenger of god, i.e., the executor of his commands). He leads the souls of people away into another kingdom. He is supposed to be horrible; of gigantic size, he walks around with long trailing hair seeking his victim. His teeth are as large as a ka wait (a hatchet or an axe).

[842] [413] The women are especially afraid of a devil whom they call u 'suid-um (the water devil). He has the power of attacking women and causing sterility in them, and if they are pregnant causing a miscarriage.

77b 753 The demoness ka khlam brings cholera and the demoness ka tihar brings severe colic.

They believe that they get malaria through the influence of the demoness ka rih, while in the region of Theriaghat the fever is ascribed to the demoness ka duba.

Smallpox, which is otherwise feared everywhere, is considered by the Khasi to be evidence of the favor of the god u siem niang thylliew. If there is someone in one of the huts sick with smallpox, the sick person is not only not avoided, but even healthy children are brought there, so that they may receive the "kiss of the god," i.e., that they may also get smallpox.

553 that a Khasi told him, [428] that all kinds of nuisance and deceptions occur with this method of name giving since one likes to save time and trouble."

"The dried fish are held by each end and cut into two pieces. Finally one wipes the yellow root that has been mixed with water on the right foot of the father, the mother, and the child."

844 782 553 Among the Synteng the following items are offered in sacrifice immediately after the birth of a child: some rice meal, eggs, roots and leaves. After the child is a month old (one often waits two months) the ceremony of the name giving is performed. This is done, if not by the sister of the mother, then by the oldest man of the sib. Sacrifices are brought again at this celebration, specifically two hens and a goat.

844 The parents of a newborn child are not allowed to cross a river, nor may they wash their clothes as long as the umbilical cord is not healed, since otherwise the mountain or river devil would harm the child.

845 Twins are considered a punishment, which has been incurred by somebody in the sib for violating a taboo. If the twins are of different sex, their bones may not later be placed in the common family grave.

782 755 ## 2. Sacrifices during the Illness of a Member of the Family.

[783] Usually sacrifices are made only for internal illnesses. Because the Khasi cannot explain the origin of these illnesses, they are of the opinion that a devil has caused them. He must be angry with the person concerned

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When the body has been burnt, the ashes and the uncalcined bones are collected by the relatives of the deceased and washed. They are then placed in a dish (*ka phiang*) which is taken to a stone repository for the bones (*mawshieng*); here a further sacrifice takes place. For three days after the burning, the maternal relatives frequent the *mawshieng*, where they offer articles of food for the spirit of the departed to eat, and then three eggs are broken (called *shat long kait ia*) in order to ascertain what is the cause of death. Until this egg-breaking has taken place the family is taboo. The ashes and the uncalcined bones are subsequently removed from the *mawshieng*, and are placed in the family monolithic, or marbok. On this occasion a special ceremony takes place.

9. *Divination by breaking eggs.*—As this is a very peculiar custom, it deserves some description. Shadwell describes it as follows:—

[58] Each case of sickness or other calamity is attributed to the influence of some evil spirit, and the first step is to ascertain what particular spirit has been at work, and for this the great institution of egg-breaking is brought into play. An expert (but not a professional) sits down before a board, in the centre of which he places an egg on a few grains of rice; after inviting the egg to speak the truth, he sweeps the rice off the board, excepting one grain left on any spot fancy dictates. Then naming a particular spirit, he asks that if he be the cause of evil, a part of the shell of the egg may be deposited near the grain of rice; he then strikes the egg sharply on the centre of the board. This process is repeated, if necessary, till the required information is obtained. The next thing is to discover what sort of offering will be acceptable to the spirit. This is ascertained in a precisely similar way, but the desired result is often not arrived at till much time and many eggs have been expended.

I have personally witnessed this egg-breaking and can vouch for the correctness of Mr. Shadwell's description. The Khasis do nothing of what they consider to be of the least importance without breaking eggs. When a Khasi builds a new house, or before he proceeds on a journey, he always breaks eggs to see whether the building or the journey will be lucky or not. I have quoted the description of egg-breaking at length, as I am informed that there is some similar custom extant in the Arrakan Hill Tracts. I hope that it will be possible to ascertain whether or not there is any similar custom in Burma.

10. *Khasi archery.*—Archery is a regular institution amongst the Khasis, who are very fond of it. Archery may be described as the Khasi national game. There are regular archery contests between the people of different villages, one village challenging another to shoot off a match. Certain conditions are fixed, such as the date and place of the match, the number of arrows to be shot by the archers, the distinguishing marks to be given to arrows of the two different sides, etc.,

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tion falls is deserted by even his wife; for all connecting with him after the fact is declared would be equally entenata. The abuse of such a custom is unlimited; private spite must enter largely into its organization; and it becomes a ready method of ruining an individual of whom the community may be jealous, or who is obnoxious to them. The civil authorities have with success looked with disfavour on it, and done much towards breaking the custom down. The missionaries also in Jawai have, no doubt, by the establishment of their small Christian colony, done much towards the same end. This system of witchcraft does not date, I am told, from a very remote period. Names of demons are from time to time invented, or rise up, and the most formidable now is a female demon, having sway over wealth, and who is connected with the superstition "tarroe". The curse may alight on an individual in many ways, of which I give the following instances of how it acts on the community.

A person may get ill, and, as in fever, become delirious; those attending on him listen attentively to his ravings, and he may constantly take some one's name in connection with his state. This person is said to have the ear of the demoness, and to use such influence for the purpose of bewitching others.

Two persons may join in trade together, and be on the best of terms for several years; but one may have a terrible dream repeatedly, or say he has, connected with their gains; he may then accuse his partner of having obtained certain power from Tarroe.

A man, originally in poverty, rising in a very short time to be wealthy, the whole village may secretly, among themselves, point at him as having entered into a compact with this demoness; but no proof is forthcoming until some person suddenly falls ill, and apparently without cause. This sick person is questioned, and even bullied into saying that he believes the suspected person is the cause of his illness. They will proceed to throw ashes in the face of the accused, as a sign that his further acquaintance is not desired. This is a common custom, and is done to a person for other reasons, such as for stealing, or committing some heinous crime. A woman who supplants the affections of another who is a wife may have ashes thrown in her face for spoiling the husband, and is thus marked, for, of course, it is done in some public place. But, to continue, the family of the sick man next count up the number of pans that have been given by the accused during their intercourse, the number is prepared, made up into a bundle, and placed at his door during the night, and a sucking pig is killed and also left there. In the morning on the first opening of the door, the sign

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is seen by the inmates, and quite as soon by the neighbours, who collect to revile and jeer the unfortunate individual; his relations leave him; his wife, if he has one, retires to her parent's or sister's home, and in no other way can he recover his position in society save by throwing away all he possesses; cash and clothes are scattered on the road as he goes out of the village, and are picked up by those who follow; his house, I was told, is also demolished, and the thatch roof carried out and burnt in the outskirts of the place.

This paper has become much longer than I had anticipated, and I fear will exhaust the interest that there may be in it. I had intended alluding to the Kúkis, Mikirs, Garos, etc., and exhibiting drawings of their burial-grounds, but this I think may be best postponed and introduced with some notes on the extension of those tribes and the people of the northern slopes of the Khasi range of hills, if this Society should think such of sufficient interest to them. I trust also that Captain Williamson, Deputy-Commissioner of the Garo Hills, now on leave in England, will give us the benefit of the valuable information I know he has obtained regarding the manners and customs of the Garo tribes, among whom he has mixed so much and so intimately.

Appendix A

Paper on the Origin, Location, etc., of the Bodo, Kooch, Dhimál People, by B. H. Hodgson, Esq., Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1849. Vol. xviii, pt. ii, p. 728.—"Thirteen leaves, each with a few grains of rice upon it, are placed by the exorcist in the segment of a circle before him, to represent the deities. The Ojha squatting on his hams before the leaves causes a pendulum attached to his thumb by a string to vibrate before them, repeating invocations the while. The god who has possessed the sick man is indicated by the exclusive vibration of the pendulum towards his representative leaf, which is then taken apart, and the god in question is asked what sacrifice he requires?—a buffalo, a hog, a fowl, or a duck to spare the sufferer (the Ojha best know how?) a hog, and it is forthwith vowed by the sick man and promised by the exorcist, but only paid when the former has recovered. On recovery the animal is sacrificed, and its *blood* offered to the offending deity."

Appendix B

Calcutta Review, 1854, p. 128. Paper by the Rev. J. Pryse.—"The universal desire to immortalise the memory of their dead ancestors on earth by the erection of stone monuments, may be deemed as a faint indication of an expectation of some kind of future existence. The sacrifice for their dead, which they call 'Suid-iap', or "Ksuid-iap', that is, the ghost or demon of the dead, may be considered indicative of the same notion. The professed intention of the sacrifice is to pacify the